Daily Report

Latin America

FBIS-LAT-94-014
Friday
21 January 1994

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FBIS-LAT-94-014 *21 January 1994*

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Cuba

Alarcon, Ross on 'Parliament at the Work Centers'

FL1901184094 Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish 1513 GMT 15 Jan 94

[Text] Through the Parliament at the Work Centers discussions of the country's economic problems, we are showing the world how much trust the Cuban workers and people have in their leaders, said Ricardo Alarcon, president of the National Assembly of the People's Government, at a meeting with Pinar del Rio union leaders on the process that is going to begin at the base level on 28 January under the auspices of the CTC [Cuban Workers Federation].

Alarcon pointed out that the goal of the Cuban Parliament at the Work Centers is not to spread the same idea throughout the country, but rather to expand it and really put it into practice, effectively managing to streamline the nation's internal finances.

(Jose Marrero Camacho), president of the Pinar del Rio Assembly of the People's Government, explained to the union leaders that in the province, for the purpose of eliminating economic problems, it is more effective to raise production efficiency than to raise the price of products. Theft that increases costs; a lack of monitoring of the workforce; and leaving one's job during the day to stand in line or to take care of personal problems were examples presented in Pinar del Rio as affecting the nation's internal economy.

During this meeting with provincial union leaders, with a view to the parliamentary assemblies at the work centers, it was suggested that every work group administer its own budget, and that the work group especially demand trustworthy accounting. Deputy (Maria Celia Santana) suggested that no personnel rosters handed down from above be accepted. Others suggested eliminating inappropriate egalitarianism [el igualitarismo] and paternalism.

A tax on salaries was amply discussed. CTC Secretary General Pedro Ross Leal said profitability and efficiency should be at the center of these discussions, with a view to solving problems.

Foreign Minister Robaina Continues African Tour

Discusses Changing Diplomacy

PA1901152394 Paris AFP in Spanish 1447 GMT 18 Jan 94

[Text] Harare, 18 Jan (AFP)—Cuban Foreign Relations Minister Roberto Robaina stated Tuesday in Zimbabwe during an AFP interview that Cuban diplomacy must be "up to date" and that it requires "proficiency to adapt to a world with very significant and different conditions." Robaina is expected to depart Zimbabwe on Tuesday and go to Zambia on the penultimate leg of an African tour that took him to Ghana and Angola and is expected to conclude in Namibia.

Robaina, who was appointed foreign relations minister in April 1993, indicated that Cuba will not compromise with respect to positions of principle, such as Cuba's independence and sovereignty, which, according to him, "are nonnegotiable. Our independence and sovereignty is not a matter for discussion, neither is our capability to speak for ourselves," Robaina stated. Cuba cannot "revert regarding those sectors that are sacred to us, sectors such as education and health, with which my people and no one in the world would forgive us if we decided to retrogress," he added.

However, he explained, Cuba "is inclined to exchange, adapt, and trade with anyone who is willing. In order to adapt to this economic world we must trade with capitalists whether we like it or not," he acknowledged. "I am not one of those who believes that all capitalists are bad," but "to trade under the pressure my country is undergoing is extremely difficult," he pointed out.

In reference to the U.S. blockade and the fall of the Soviet Union, Robaina explained that "conditions" in Cuba "are abnormal. My country cannot trade as it wishes and with whom it wishes. We would first have to disclose who are investing and how they are doing it. But we cannot do that. If we did," there would be, "pressure ... blackmail and persecution against anyone who decides to do business with us."

Nevertheless, Robaina expressed optimism with respect to future relations between Cuba and the United States. "I do not believe that the new generation of Americans is injected with that virus of aggression against a country that does not represent a threat to the United States," he pointed out. "I cannot believe," he stated, "that now that we are about to begin a new century, countries such as Cuba and the United States, which are merely 90 miles apart, can continue to live as we are currently living." I am "convinced that there must be a solution, but the solution must not imply that my country ceases to exist as a country. If it means that we have to revert to being the United States' back door, then we prefer that the solution never be found."

Robaina indicated that during his visit to New York last September he noticed that "the American people are becoming more aware of the senselessness of this relationship. Our message is being heard and more people are now aware that Cuba is not the hell it is depicted as being." Robaina explained that "at the government level there is no contact whatsoever, except with the Coast Guard—border guard contacts with some joint action against drug trafficking. In addition, we are discussing a telecommunications project, but there are many differences and many stumbling blocks."

In recalling his experiences in Angola from 1988 to 1989 when he was a member of an "internationalist" contingent, the Cuban foreign minister stated that "there has

been no greater experience in my personal life." It "was the most important stage of my life," he reiterated. "In Angola we were able to modestly contribute to Namibia being what it is today, to its independence." He added that "the pages my country wrote in Angola were written most of all for Angola, not for Cuba."

Robaina, who at 37 is the youngest member of the Cuban Government, expressed his "amazement" at the interest caused by his appointment. "I am simply a visible face, maybe one of the most visible," he insisted. The Cuban minister added, "I don't see why the appointment of a minister my age should be a surprise when there are 5 million Cubans who are younger than 30."

Our "fundamental priority lies in the surroundings we inhabit," he pointed out before proceeding to explain that Cuba's priority is in the "Caribbean and Latin American" region, but that Cuba must maintain "special relations" with Africa.

"My country is what it is because of Africa. Cuba is a mix of Spanish and African," he explained and added that Cuba, "has much to contribute in some fields, such as education, health, medicine, and human resources."

In addition, the minister declared that he is "passionately mad about human rights, because of the human aspect of my job," but believes that Cuba is being unjustly accused when "we are one of the countries where more human beings know that they have rights. Ten million Cubans know they have rights because they know they are humans," he indicated. "The reality for millions of human beings who inhabit this earth is much more tragic because they are not recognized as human beings and they neither know how to read or write. Who speaks about child prostitution and who is organizing it? Who speaks about the sale of children's organs? Who speaks about xenophobia," the minister asked before concluding.

Zambia Telephone Interview

FL1901171894 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 0000 GMT 19 Jan 94

[Telephone interview with Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina by Jose Mejia in Lusaka, Zambia—live]

[Text] It is right now exactly 0213 hours in Lusaka, Zambia, and I am on line with the Intercontinental Hotel, where Cuban Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina is staying. Comrade Foreign Minister, I know you have had an intense work agenda to cover in 24 hours since you arrived in Zambia from Zimbabwe. We would like to know about the different activities carried out by you and the delegation accompanying you on this visit through five African countries, and also about the meeting you had today with Zambian President Frederick Chiluba and other prominent figures. A good evening to you from Havana, Cuba.

[Robaina] Well, yes, Mejia. Indeed, the past 24 hours have been extremely intense, and we will be leaving for Namibia in a few hours. In any case, I can assure you that these have been hours well used, to the extent that relations between the two countries are strong and historic. However, we have not spent our time talking and discussing, just to talk about how historic they have been, but rather to make them even more historic, and to make history, to the extent that we may be capable of strengthening [these relations].

We have had extensive discussions with the Foreign Ministry, essentially in the spheres of education and health. These areas, in which cooperation already exists, will continue to be explored. There is a willingness on the part of the Zambian Government to continue and indeed increase the compensated cooperation in these spheres. A number of new variants have also appeared in the spheres of sports and agriculture, in which the Zambian Government believes Cuba has achieved a good deal of results that would also be useful to them. They have therefore asked that these be established as important mechanisms....

[Mejia, interrupting] Yes.

[Robaina, continuing] for cooperation and exchange. From the moment we arrived, the first hours we were here, they have expressed their country's absolute gratitude, particularly for the way in which Cuba, despite its limitations and difficulties, has been able to contribute to training its physicians, engineers, and teachers. They are truly grateful for that, and vastly appreciative of everything Cuba has done for Africa. I never tire of replying to statements of this sort that although it is important for gratitude to exist, we also owe our Cuban-ness of today, and today's Cuba, to among other things, our African roots. And I think that the special thing today....

[Mejia] Yes.

[Robaina, continuing] has been meeting with President Frederick Chiluba, who furthermore sends a special greeting to our people, and has recognized in a very profound and very serious manner the heroism of the Cuban people and the characteristics of its principal leaders, especially Comrade Fidel. He said he wished this continent had a lot of men like Fidel because it certainly needs them, really needs them. But, above all, he emphasized the way the people draw enough strength from where there appears to be no strength, enough to resist. He sent special greetings....

[Mejia] Yes.

[Robaina, continuing] and made public his decision to visit Cuba on whatever date is most suitable for both the Cuban and Zambian sides.

I think these hours have been put to very good use, and, I repeat, one comes out of it greatly satisfied....

[Mejia] Um-hmm.

[Robaina, continuing] to again be able to greet this land, this country, these men and women who maintain a special relationship with Cuba.

[Mejia] Comrade Foreign Minister, we know that the current government of Zambia tries to keep an active profile in foreign policy, basically with its neighbors in the region, as is the case with Malawi and, more recently, its mediation in contacts between representatives of Luanda and UNITA. What news do you have about the evolution of negotiations between the Angolan Government and UNITA?

[Robaina] Well, this is a topic with which we are familiar and with which we continue to keep abreast. Many of us people continue to be, in one way or another, linked to conflicts and negotiations of this kind.

[Mejia] Yes.

[Robaina] The information is exactly the same as that in our country. There are some talks going on, and both the Angolan side and the Zambian [words indistinct], site of the talks that are being held, agree. We notice confidence and optimism that they could evolve.

In any case, I would like, in this (?detour), not to lose hope. We know what has always happened with the negotiations carried out domestically by the Angolan side. Some of the parties that are participating in this negotiating process do not always do what has been agreed upon and committed to, and this makes the road much more difficult.

As you know, the only thing Cuba can really do is express a clear desire to see the negotiations progress, a clear desire to have them progress in the best way possible—to have everyone do the impossible to keep Angola from returning to the positions of a declared war. And I say an openly declared war because although some may think that the war has ended, the war has not ended in Angola. There is a tremendously difficult, tremendously complex internal situation that is the result of the way this entire process of negotiations has been obstructed. It is getting much more difficult.

[Mejia] In conclusion, Foreign Minister Robaina, in a few hours you leave for Windhoek. I understand that during your visit to Namibia, and prior to concluding your African tour, you will be meeting with President Sam Nujoma and other government officials.

[Robaina] That is correct. We leave early tomorrow morning for Namibia. We have many meetings scheduled in Namibia. We will be meeting with members of the parliament, ministers, and with President Sam Nujoma. I think we can continue to talk on the telephone. We are happy to say that our tour ends in Namibia and then we will be going back home.

[Mejia] Comrade Foreign Minister Roberto Minister, I greatly appreciate your talking to me. I know I have robbed you of some minutes of sleep. It is now 0220 in Lusaka, Zambia.

Listeners, as you have heard, we have been talking to Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina who is on a tour of several African countries.

Thank you, Mr. Foreign Minister, for your statements to Radio Rebelde in Havana, Cuba.

Travels to Namibia

FL1901140594 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1000 GMT 19 Jan 94

[Text] Cuban Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina will travel to Namibia today. The Cuban foreign minister's official visit to Namibia will conclude a tour of several African nations. Robaina will arrive in Namibia from Zambia, where he met with Zambian President Frederick Chiluba. During the meeting with Robaina, President Chiluba thanked Cuba for helping Zambia in the health field. Chiluba also stressed that ties between Lusaka and Havana are very strong. Robaina delivered a message to Chiluba from President Fidel Castro and, on behalf of the people and government of Cuba, thanked the people of Zambia for their solidarity.

Namibia, Cuba Sign Visa Exemption Agreement

FL2001135794 Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish 1000 GMT 20 Jan 94

[Text] Today, his second day in Namibia, Cuban Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina will meet with Namibian Prime Minister Hage Geingob, National Assembly Speaker Mose Tjitendero, and Health and Social Services Minister Nicky Iyambo. Robaina will also meet with Cuban officials and doctors working in Namibia. There are 64 Cuban health collaborators in Namibia, most of whom are in Windhoek and surrounding areas. On 21 January, Robaina will meet with President Sam Nujoma and Trade and Industry Minister Hidipo Hamutenya. On 19 January, Foreign Minister Robaina signed an agreement eliminating all visa requirements for the citizens of the two countries.

On arrival in Windhoek, reporters asked Robaina about the objectives of his tour of Africa. He told them that it is part of a diplomatic offensive launched by Cuba. The foreign minister added that the so-called Dark Continent is a priority in this offensive because of the cultural and historic ties that link Cuba to the area.

Vice Foreign Minister Ends Visit to Canary Islands

FL2001141394 Havana Radio Progreso Network in Spanish 1200 GMT 20 Jan 94

[Text] Cuban Vice Foreign Minister Isabel Allende has concluded a working visit to Las Palmas, Canary Islands, where she met with political and government officials. The vice foreign minister met with Manuel Hermozo, president of the government of the Canary Islands, and with Jesus Gomez, vice president of the Canary Islands council. The island authorities confirmed a coming visit to Cuba by representatives of the government of the

Canary Islands to sign an agreement for the renovation of the building that will house the headquarters of the Cuban-Canary Islands Association.

Allende's working visit to Spain began on 11 January in Madrid where she met with high-ranking Spanish Foreign Ministry officials to analyze relations between the two countries and to prepare for Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina's scheduled visit to Spain.

Raul Castro Concludes Cienfuegos Work Visit

FL2001021094 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 0000 GMT 20 Jan 94

[Text] On the last day of his work visit to Cienfuegos Province, Army General Raul Castro Ruz, minister of the FAR [Revolutionary Armed Forces], visited (El Jobero), the first community of materials-efficient housing finished in that province by Military Construction Enterprise No. 3 from Villa Clara. The residents of the community are officers and civilian workers who, by residing there along with their relatives, contribute to raising the combat readiness of their unit.

Castro, who is also second secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba, asked about the living conditions of the residents of (El Jobero), who have, among other facilities, a Family Doctor Program physician and other services nearby.

Also, in Cumanayagua, the FAR minister visited the Barajagua People's Council, one of Cienfuegos' most outstanding; and, at the special troops regiment, heard a report from Colonel Jose Antonio Marrero on the unit's preparation and combat readiness.

Upon taking his leave, Raul reiterated that we can be proud of our four armies—the Central, the Western, the Eastern, and the Youth Labor Army; of our Revolutionary Armed Forces; of our heroic people; and of our commander in chief, Fidel Castro.

First ANAP Farmers Discussion Group Scheduled for 23 Jan

FL2001181394 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 0000 GMT 20 Jan 94

[Interview with Orlando Lugo Fonte, president of the National Association of Small Farmers, by Felix Fernando Garrido at Radio Rebelde studios in Havana—live]

[Text] [Garrido] Good evening, Orlando Lugo Fonte, president of the National Association of Small Farmers [ANAP] and member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba.

[Lugo] Good evening.

[Garrido] As we have heard, 1994 will be a year of challenges for the farmers and for our country in general. What are the main goals of ANAP for 1994?

[Lugo] With the Agriculture Ministry and the Sugar Industry Ministry, ANAP plans to contribute to the sugarcane harvest. The farmers and cooperatives will do what they must do. We will also contribute to the food plan by exploiting, to a maximum, the production capacity of the cooperative and farming sectors.

[Garrido] In other words, in 1994 the ANAP will not abandon its production potential.

[Lugo] No. We cannot do that because we know the people need the products we grow and produce. As the weather improves, and once we can get more money, we will continue to increase production.

We are also working along other well established guidelines aimed at consolidating the cooperative movement. Today, more than ever, we must consolidate our cooperatives. We must do this, especially now that the country has created the Basic Cooperative Production Units [UBPC]. We currently have 1,118 cooperatives; of these 1,008 are profitable. We have approximately 172 cooperatives that are not reporting profits, and we are going to work with these cooperatives to consolidate the cooperative movement and ensure that it truly becomes an example of efficiency and production. This is one of our main guidelines.

We are also working on consolidating the credit and services cooperatives. We want these cooperatives to grow strong. We want these cooperatives to have some money. The sugarcane workers are now being allowed to purchase their own tractors, forklifts, and carts. This enables them to do their own harvesting, their own cutting and lifting. We believe this is something we must work on because it is important.

[Garrido] What about idle land and the economic aspect?

[Lugo] In addition to the agreement that created the UBPC, the Central Committee is encouraging groups of comrades to join and form new UBPC's to work land that is idle. The agreement also states that the state will give land that is good for growing tobacco to those comrades who wish to work the land and grow tobacco. Hundreds of comrades in the tobacco growing provinces are joining the movement. They are now producing tobacco and products to feed themselves.

[Garrido] This year marks the 35th anniversary of the creation of the agrarian reform law. Will the ANAP be discussing the economic measures with its farmers?

[Lugo] Yes. On 23 January we will hold our first meeting with farmers and cooperative members from all over the country. We are going to discuss the economic measures the country should adopt. I have no doubt that farmers, the men and women who have always participated in the country's great tasks and missions, will discuss the measures and suggest those that should be adopted. On this 35th anniversary of the agrarian reform law, I believe it is our duty to participate in these discussions just as our working sector is doing.

Chiapas Crisis

Lawmakers Present 16-Point Proposal on Chiapas Conflict

PA1901212294 Mexico City Radio ACIR Network in Spanish 1925 GMT 19 Jan 94

[Report by Jose Luis Armenta from the "Vector 21" newscast]

[Text] A group of legislators today presented to the Permanent Commission of Congress a report on the situation in Chiapas. The report was based on the group's recent visit to the state.

The two senators and 11 deputies who make up this group under the leadership of Victor Manuel Tinoco Rubi pointed out that the Chiapas conflict emerged because of the state's long history of backwardness and various forms of domination that have retarded its full development.

The document says that in this state there are unacceptable examples of inequality and poverty. After reading the balance of the situation, Michoacan Senator Victor Manuel Tinoco Rubi said violence in certain areas of Chiapas has become another element of destabilization. After reviewing the situation in Chiapas, the group of 13 legislators from the six congressional factions that make up the Congress drafted a 16-point proposal asking all sectors of society to contribute to the solution of the conflict.

When reading the document, Victor Manuel Tinoco Rubi said the relations between the Federal Government and the state of Chiapas should be strengthened. A cease-fire must go into effect as a necessary condition for peace. The senator said criminal laws should be revised, especially criminal proceedings against Indians. Authorities must support the job being done by the National Human Rights Commission in the southeastern part of the country. There is also a need to review and speed up the processing of documents concerning the granting of lands, as well as other matters. Here are the statements made by Victor Manuel Tinoco:

[Begin Tinoco recording] The Plural Group [Grupo Plural] hopes Congress will continue to contribute to the resolution of this conflict with the consensus of all political parties, and it should draft an agenda of legislative proposals to contribute to this end. The possibility of learning about its results in subsequent periods should be left open. We ask that the Permanent Commission authorize the Plural Group to give a follow-up to the fulfillment and application of all these recommendations and proposals and the other actions and proposals brought forth by other national authorities concerning these same problems. [end recording]

Moreover, the board of directors of the Chamber of Deputies was installed a few minutes ago, following the Permanent Commission session. It will guide the work to be done during the special period of sessions to review and approve the bill for a general amnesty in Chiapas. Institutional Revolutionary Party Deputy (Juan Antonio Neme Dipp) was elected, and he will be the one to chair the board of directors at the Chamber of Deputies for this special period of sessions, which will begin today.

Rebel Attacks Expected in 'Next 24 Hours'

PA1901200694 Mexico City Radio Acir Network in Spanish 1927 GMT 19 Jan 94

[Bulletin No. 22 issued by the Mexican National Defense Secretariat on the situation in Chiapas; place and date not given; from the "Vector 21" newscast]

[Text] The National Defense Secretariat reports it has knowledge that in the next 24 hours rebel groups plan to stage armed attacks against the communities of Yajalon, Sabanillas, and Venustiano Carranza.

Meanwhile, reports have been received from residents of the region that on 17 January approximately 20 armed individuals, who had their faces covered, stole numerous head of cattle from a ranch located between the communities of Copainala and Coapilla. Up until now, soldiers continue guarding the communities mentioned in previous communiques and continue to carry out social work in these communities.

Peace Commissioner Appeals for Peace, Reconciliation

PA2001030494 Mexico City Radio ACIR Network in Spanish 0043 GMT 20 Jan 94

[From the "Vector 21" newscast]

[Text] At about noon today, Manuel Camacho Solis, special commissioner for peace and reconciliation in Chiapas, delivered a very brief message over the local radio. The message read as follows:

This is Manuel Camacho Solis and I am the commissioner for peace. President Carlos Salinas de Gortari has approved an amnesty law. We are now waiting for its approval by the National Congress. This law will help us attain peace.

The message adds: It is necessary to beg the Indians'and the communities' forgiveness for all the suffering they have endured. Now is the time to stop bothering one another. Now is the time to look after our families. Let everyone work in his own home and let everyone have tranquility in his community.

The message goes on to say: There is a new governor. He is going to send his representatives to help you and your communities. Now is the time to work again in the [word indistinct], to take care of your families, and improve Chiapas. Chiapas is everything. Let us all make an effort to build peace in Chiapas.

Government Withdraws Troops From Within Chiapas Towns

PA2101035094 Mexico City Radio ACIR Network in Spanish 0144 GMT 21 Jan 94

[Report by Alma Rosa Baez from Los Pinos Presidential Residence; from "Vector 21" newscast—live relay]

[Text] Manuel Camacho Solis, commissioner for peace and reconciliation in Chiapas State, has disclosed that this afternoon he met at Los Pinos Presidential Residence with President Carlos Salinas de Gortari and the secretaries of government and defense. He pointed out that the government has decided to withdraw its troops from within the communities in Chiapas State and station them on the outskirts of the towns. Camacho said the troops will no longer be in the towns nor will they provide surveillance and patrols in cities or towns. The government has also decided that the humanitarian tasks the troops were carrying out, such as medical treatment and the distribution of food, will gradually be transferred to the local authorities, the Red Cross, and humanitarian organizations.

Camacho Solis said that these actions will contribute to detente in Chiapas State, adding that the constitutional government's goal is, above all else, to foster peace and reconciliation in the region. Camacho Solis said that in this way, the Mexican Republic will be strengthened.

[Begin Camacho Solis recording] With institutional strength, with a government that favors negotiation, and with an extraordinary consensus within civilian society in favor of peace, Mexico is not only capable of resolving the very difficult situation in Chiapas, and thereby avoiding the very high costs experienced by other countries, but it is also capable of taking new steps in favor of justice, respecting the Indians, creating broader opportunities for political participation, and supporting Chiapas State, as it has already begun to do. [end recording]

Camacho Solis declined to answer questions from reporters; he only read the communique.

Meanwhile, President Carlos Salinas de Gortari has decreed a waiver and tax exemptions on various taxes, thereby providing Chiapas residents with administrative facilities. Taking into consideration that the state's economic situation is normalizing, and in an effort to ease the people's fiscal and administrative expenses, it has been decreed that, beginning this month and until June, income tax payments will be waived for taxpayers who are paid salaries, without affecting their right to receive in cash the funds they are due as credit on their salaries. Also exempted from tax payments are taxpayers whose homes or establishments are in the affected areas. Also, individuals who must file tax returns or pay federal taxes will be able to conduct those procedures and payments by 31 July without paying any fines whatsoever.

During the current fiscal year, there will be no charge for the issuance of nonimmigrant permits; this will benefit bus drivers and the operators of cargo and dump trucks at the Ciudad Hidalgo customs post in Chiapas State.

Among the municipalities that will benefit from this decree are Altamirano, Ocosingo, San Cristobal de las Casas, Comitan, Las Margaritas, La Independencia, Chanal, Oxchuc, Chilon, Pueblo Nuevo Solistahuacan, and San Juan Cancun.

This decree, which will be published in Friday's edition of the Official Gazette, states that these actions are aimed at restoring order and harmony in Chiapas State.

I would also like to comment that about one hour ago, approximately 40 community representatives from Chiapas State arrived at Los Pinos Presidential Residence. They are holding a private meeting with President Salinas and I am waiting for them to emerge to talk with them.

Chamber of Deputies Approves Amnesty for EZLN Rebels

PA2101044594 Madrid EFE in Spanish 0211 GMT 21 Jan 94

[Text] Mexico City, 20 Jan (EFE)—The rebels who staged an armed uprising in Chiapas State on 1 January can benefit from an amnesty that was approved today by a plenum of the Mexican Chamber of Deputies, as long as they suspend their violent actions as of today. They will only benefit from the amnesty if they surrender their weapons and release the hostages they are holding, and they must adhere to the terms established by the commission that is going to implement the law.

In addition to sending the amnesty bill to the National Congress, President Salinas appointed Manuel Camacho Solis as the special commissioner to negotiate peace and to establish contact with the rebels in the Zapatist Army of National Liberation. The Amnesty Law suspends penal sactions against individuals who participated in the violent occupation of several towns in Chiapas and in later clashes with the Mexican Army.

The Chamber of Deputies received the bill and modified certain articles to make the deadline for the surrender of weapons more flexible and to establish that one condition for the surrender of weapons would be a willingness to enter negotiations. The bill originally established that the sole beneficiaries of the amnesty would be those people who participated in violent incidents between 1 January and 1100 on 16 January if they surrendered their weapons and adhered to the benefits of this law.

The deputies added to the draft law an article that calls on the executive branch to create a commission that will coordinate the implementation of the law to strengthen legal procedures and to prevent setting deadlines that hinder the implementation of the law. The application of benefits of the amnesty will go into effect the moment the commission declares a definitive end to hostile actions.

Another change made to the draft law was the elimination of a 30-day deadline and the inclusion of the delivery of hostages. Also, it emphasized that the people receiving benefits of the law will not be interrogated, investigated, summoned, or bothered, inasmuch as amnesty includes a respect for human rights.

The ruling explains that the Amnesty Law must be made public and disseminated in Spanish and in the nine indian dialects that are spoken in the area so that it will be learned as best possible by those for whom it is intended.

The armed conflict in Chiapas began on 1 January with the violent takeover of San Cristobal de las Casas, Ocosingo, Altamirano, Oxchuc, and Las Margaritas, from where the Armed Forces expelled the rebels who remain entrenched in the community of Guadalupe Tepeyac near the border with Guatemala.

Rebels Say Conditions for Dialogue Unfulfilled

PA2101133094 Paris AFP in Spanish 0842 GMT 21 Jan 94

[Text] San Cristobal de las Casas, Mexico (AFP)—The "prior conditions" to begin a dialogue with the government have not been fulfilled "in their entirety," because the Army "continues to violate the cease-fire," the Mexican guerrillas stated in two communiques published in the local newspaper TIEMPO on Friday.

The documents, which AFP received tonight in advance, are addressed to Peace Commissioner Manuel Camacho and Samuel Ruiz, bishop of this city. They note that the guerrillas have not received "any written communication" regarding the proposed amnesty announced last week by the government, which would cover rebel actions staged between 1 and 16 January.

In this regard, the rebels note that the "mentioned amnesty law" is "premature in the current dialogue process, because the political and social causes that gave rise to our movement still prevail."

Report on Interview With EZLN Rebel Commander

PA2001022894 Mexico City Radio ACIR Network in Spanish 1335 GMT 19 Jan 94

[Report by Juan Carlos Santoyo from the "Panorama" newscast]

[Text] It was almost 1600, and the sun was hot and bright with only a handful of small clouds to reduce the extreme heat. The road was long and formidable. Nevertheless, it was well worth the effort to find those who just a few days earlier had laid siege to Ocosingo. After plenty of waiting and searching for signs of any member of the Zapatist National Liberation Army [EZLN], we finally spotted a group of EZLN members 3 or 4 km ahead of us. We cautiously moved forward. Suddenly, as we neared them, someone blocked our path. There were four young men wearing the EZLN uniform: green shirt, brown trousers, and plastic boots. Their weapons were AK-47 assault rifles.

The question came immediately: What are you looking for here? You are taking a great risk.

We responded: We want to talk with you.

They answered: We will see if it can be arranged. We will ask our commander.

About 35 minutes later the answer came. Follow me, said one rebel. It is not too far. We walked for about 20 minutes under large shade trees. It was time enough to reach our destiny. We never knew his name, but he was in charge of the Ocosingo occupation. Although his Spanish was somewhat broken, his ideas were clear, especially the reason he is fighting.

[Begin unidentified rebel commander recording] My native brothers need land that they do not have. The land is there, but the landowners control it all. We need land, and besides the land, we also need fertilizer, machinery, and irrigation, just like the landowners have.

If the landowners have land, why can we not have the same? This is our question. For this reason alone, we are fighting for land. We are doing this to enable all native Indians in the Mexican Republic to have a place to live. We need homes, but not the homes we have now. They have no drainage, power, drinking water, or parks—things that any human being desires. They pushed us up against the wall, and then they call us lazy and ignorant. If we are ignorant, it is because the government has kept us that way. [end recording]

When we asked about their strategy or their strength, their answer came immediately: That is a secret, but I assure you there are plenty of us. Those who are here, he said, are not here because we like it. For years, various candidates and their parties have passed through this area. They made many promises, but none of them have been fulfilled. Instead of dying of hunger or of some illness such as measles, cholera, or snake poisoning, we would rather die fighting by way of a bullet. We are tired of broken promises and empty words.

He kept his face covered with a ski mask, through which we could only see his honey-brown eyes. In his voice we heard no fear but, rather, bitterness from the years of destitution, persecution, and neglect.

[Begin rebel commander recording] We are not followers of Marxism-Leninism. Many simply do not know there is a Marx [words indistinct]. One does not have to be Marxist-Leninist to realize who is behind this government. One does not have to be poor or a big-bellied child to [words indistinct]. One only cries. One does not have to study works of Marx, Che Guevara, or others. [end recording]

This interview lasted some 45 minutes, and the EZLN rebel commander concluded by announcing that his

forces will not lay down their weapons, despite the amnesty. He said the most important step the government must take is to do everything necessary to finish with the tyrants and exploiters of the Indians and peasants in the highlands of Chiapas. We said good-bye with a handshake and a thank you. Before we left, he warned us by saying that we had better leave early, because nobody knows what might happen in the late afternoon or at night. He added that we are more important alive than dead. He then turned away from us and walked into the dense jungle, where many have found not only danger, but also death.

Government Creates Commission for Indian Peoples

PA2001193194 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 1731 GMT 19 Jan 94

[Text] Mexico City, 19 Jan (NOTIMEX)—The Federal Government today decided to create the National Commission for the Overall Development of and Social Justice for Indian Peoples [Comision Nacional de Desarrollo Integral y Justicia Social para los Pueblos Indigenas], which will be in charge of promoting, protecting, and supporting the development of Indian communities and improving their living conditions.

A document issued by the Presidency and published in the official gazette established that the commission will guarantee the full administration of justice, as well as respect for individual and collective rights in favor of Indian peoples and communities in Mexico.

The commission will issue recommendations to the Federal Government for the definition and implementation of general and specific policies necessary for the proper attention to the Indian communities' social problems, with full respect for their identify, customs, traditions, and institutions.

The commission will be made up of representatives from the Government, Foreign Relations, Finances, Social Development, Agriculture, Communications, Education, Health, and Labor Secretariats.

It will also include representatives from the Secretariat of Agrarian Reform, the Attorney General's Office, the National Indian Institute, the Agrarian Prosecutor's Office [Procuraduria Agraria], the National Council for Culture and Arts [Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes], the Mexican Social Security Institute, the National Water Commission [Comision Nacional del Agua], and the Federal Electricity Commission [Comision Federal de Electricidad].

The president of the Republic will appoint the commission's president, who in turn will appoint a technical secretary.

The document specifies that the commission members will hold the same rank as a deputy secretary of state, deputy prosecutor, or head of a decentralized agency, as applicable.

The new Commission will have an autonomous consultative council [Consejo Consultivo] as a mechanism that will allow consultation with and participation by the society. Representatives from Indian organizations as well as from social and private sectors will be able to participate as honorary members.

The functions the commission will perform include promoting and supporting the implementation of coordinated actions based on agreements, as well as conducting studies and analyses to support the overall development of Indian peoples and improve their living conditions.

The commission will also honor international commitments signed by the Mexican Government on the subject, and will receive, review, and, when pertinent, will propose the implementation of recommendations and suggestions received from the Consultative Council through the commission president.

Salinas Installs Commission

PA2001203294 Mexico City XEW Television Network in Spanish 0430 GMT 20 Jan 94

[From the "24 Hour" newscast]

[Excerpts] President Carlos Salinas de Gortari has appointed Beatriz Paredes Rangel president of the National Commission for the Overall Development of and Social Justice for Indian Peoples [Comision Nacional de Desarrollo Integral y Justicia Social para los Pueblos Indigenas], which was created by Presidential Agreement on Wednesday [19 January] as published in the official gazette. At 2000 President Salinas held a 30-minute meeting with Mrs. Paredes and representatives of several churches, indigenous community leaders, prominent intellectual figures, authors, actors, and other Mexican citizens to install the advisory commission for the National Commission for Overall Development and Social Justice for Indigenous Peoples. The meeting took place in the Vicente Guerrero Room at Los Pinos, the official presidential residence. The advisory commission held its first meeting at Los Pinos, which lasted two hours, prior to meeting with President Salinas. [passage omitted]

President Salinas is scheduled to meet with 42 representatives of more than 200 indigenous groups this Thursday. The official list of members of the National Commission for Overall Development and Social Justice for Indigenous Peoples will be completed in the next few days.

Lawmakers Open Sessions To Discuss Amnesty Bill

PA2001225894 Mexico City XEW Television Network in Spanish 0430 GMT 20 Jan 94

[From the "24 Hours" newscast]

[Text] In a plenary session of Congress, Mexican deputies and senators formally opened a special period of sessions in which the president's initiative to grant

amnesty for violent actions in the Mexican state of Chiapas will be the only topic of discussion.

First, the Chamber of Deputies opened its session and elected by majority (Juan Antonio Memidip), PRI [Institutional Revolutionary Party] deputy for the state of Veracruz, as president of the special session. Before this, the Permanent Commission of Congress met briefly to receive the report from the commission of deputies and senators who traveled to Chiapas to study the conflict. Basically, the report, which was read by PRI Senator Victor Manuel Tinoco, indicates that the legislative commission learned about all of the demands of the people of Chiapas. They proposed that Congress continue to contribute to resolving the conflict and that all political parties draft a legislative agenda offering solutions.

The Joint Government and Constitutional Affairs and Justice Commission of the Chamber of Deputies met tonight to receive proposals from all political parties on the draft amnesty bill. This will permit them to draft a resolution that will be presented to the plenum on Thursday.

The proposals are varied and include:

1. The PAN [National Action Party] asked that those believed responsible for kidnapping and amassing weapons not receive the benefits of the amnesty. It also asked that the amnesty bill be publicized not only though the official newspaper but also through edicts in all places, both in Spanish and all dialects spoken in the region.

2. The Cardenist Front demanded that the amnesty not be limited to offenses committed after 1 January 1994, because several offenses were committed in late 1993.

3. The PRD [Party of the Democratic Revolution], in addition to demanding that constitutional reforms be passed to offer integral solutions to the problems of the Indians of Chiapas, asked that first negotiations be held, problems be resolved, and then amnesty be offered.

4. The Authentic Party of the Mexican Revolution proposed that no Mexican or foreign mercenaries be given amnesty.

5. The PPS [Popular Socialist Party] demanded that fundamental solutions be found to the Chiapas conflict, because an amesty law alone will not resolve anything.

All political parties agreed that terms for surrendering weapons must be eased and time must be permitted for negotiations.

Upon beginning its analysis of the draft amnesty bill, one of the first changes made by the Government and Justice Commission was to extend the deadline for crimes that qualify for a pardon from 16 to 20 January 1994.

The resolution on the draft amnesty bill will be ready Thursday morning, and if no changes are introduced, it will be immediately discussed at the plenum of the Chamber of Deputies.

Guatemala

De Leon Announces Cabinet Changes

PA1901235494 Guatemala City Teleonce Television in Spanish 1900 GMT 19 Jan 94

["Excerpt" of a news conference by Guatemalan President Ramiro de Leon Carpio on cabinet changes in Guatemala City on 19 January; from the "Telepress" newscast; broadcast in progress—recorded]

[Text] ...the task of directly studying and evaluating the performances of each of the state institutions, and as a state duty, I have been forced to make changes in the government cabinet which I consider necessary to strengthen or, as some news media have put it, to oxygenate the cabinet and government in general, thereby enabling them to function as a much stronger team.

Upon completing the necessary evaluations, I had to thank certain government employees for their cooperation, as in the case with Foreign Minister Arturo Fajardo Maldonado, who will be replaced by Marithza Ruiz de Vielman, based on her background, capabilities, and human and professional qualities.

In all the ministries I am going to mention, you can rest assured we conducted a flawless examination of the appointees, and that their appointments were based exclusively on the capabilities they have displayed in the numerous activities they have pursued, their qualifications, and especially their professional and human qualities and also, unquestionably, their performances in other disciplines or activities, public as well as private.

Engineer Oscar Armando Martinez Anaya, who was minister of communications, transportation, and public works, will be replaced by Eng. Jorge Erdmenger de la Fuente. The Economy Ministry, which soon we hope to be able to legally call by the name we are currently using, Foreign Trade Ministry, will be headed by Eduardo Gonzalez Castillo, replacing Fanny de Estrada, who resigned some time ago because of health problems. The Finance Ministry was and still is headed by Richard Aitkenhead, who presented his irrevocable resignation some time ago because he was appointed to an important position in an international organization. I spoke with Aitkenhead and after accepting his resignation I decided to replace him with Economist Ana Ordonez de Molina, who until now was executive secretary of the Presidency. Her appointment was based on the follow-up evaluation I referred to earlier.

As a strategy to strengthen the economic cabinet, Romulo Caballeros was secretary general of economic planning up until December. He accepted the position solely to participate in and cooperate with the government in the area of planning—a mission he carried out perfectly because that institution worked with the economic cabinet on the 180-day plan and the 1994-95 government agenda. Having fulfilled his goal, and since he is no longer with us, I have appointed Guillermo Rodriguez Magual as secretary general of economic planning.

Eighteen Persons Injured in Two Bomb Attacks

PA2001141194 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 1318 GMT 20 Jan 94

[Text] Guatemala City, 20 Jan (NOTIMEX)—Unidentified individuals detonated a bomb in front of the National Congress and another in front of the National Printing Press [Tipografia Nacional], injuring 18 persons early this morning, voluntary firemen reported here today.

The source indicated that the explosive device, which blew up in front of the Congress building at 0500 [1100 GMT], only caused property damage.

The source added that the other bomb blew up very early in the morning in front of the bus stop in the vicinity of the National Printing Press where 18 persons were seriously injured.

The firemen said the bomb that exploded in front of the Congress building contained high explosives but the one in front of the National Printing Press was a fragmentation grenade.

The attacks took place during an increase in Legislative and Executive Branch campaigns in favor of popular consensus and campaigns by radical groups and peasant organizations opposing the political event scheduled for 30 January.

Government Minister Denounces Attacks

PA2001235794 Guatemala City Teleonce Television in Spanish 2100 GMT 20 Jan 94

[From the "Telepress" newscast]

[Text] Security forces are investigating the explosion of a grenade thrown by unidentified individuals Wednesday night, which killed a child and wounded 17 other people. The forces also are investigating another explosion that did considerable damage to the Legislative Building and nearby areas. This is Government Minister Arnoldo Ortiz Moscoso.

[Begin recording] [Ortiz Moscoso] Perpetrators of this barbaric method will get nowhere. It is only a means of underscoring their personal positions. Printed materials found at the site of these explosions call on the people to imitate these rebellious groups in opposing the plebiscite. I think, however, that they are getting nowhere and will not get anywhere. The Guatemalan people are fed up with this type of tactic and violence.

[Unidentified reporter] What about the bomb thrown last night in front of the [words indistinct]?

[Ortiz Moscoso] That is something different. That was not a leaflet bomb. We are alarmed about this explosion.

I visited the place at about 1930 on my way home after leaving my office. The police were there in force also. We want to capture these irresponsible, wicked people. This is the only way I can describe them. I must inform you and the general public of my grief on learning that a child was killed by the this morning's explosion. This blood must be on the head of the perpetrators. It is unthinkable that such people detonate grenades at a place where tired people are waiting to go home.

[Reporter] Can such explosions be regarded as attempts at destabilizing the government?

[Ortiz Moscoso] I would rather say it is an attempt at destabilizing the democratic system, which is different. The government is represented by President de Leon. Such an attack on innocent people cannot be understood to be an attempt to destabilize the government but as a direct attack on democracy and the Guatemalan people's desire to live in peace. [end recording]

Article Claims Army Warned Mexico of Chiapas Unrest

PA2001130994 Guatemala City SIGLO VEINTIUNO (MAGAZINE 21 Supplement) in Spanish 16 Jan 94 pp 3, 6

[Unattributed article: "Chiapas Ablaze"]

[Excerpt] It is the poorest and most backward area of a country that has become a very important U.S. partner. It is the most neglected state of the Mexican federation, even though in San Cristobal de las Casas, the first city the guerrillas took, an opera theater costing $10.5 million is being built. The theater will seat 1,000 persons and will have a concert hall and a parking lot that can easily accommodate 250 cars. It is an area that was only reached by the economic compensators of the Carlos Salinas de Gortari administration until after rumors of the existence of guerrilla groups became stronger. According to former Mexican guerrilla Gustavo Hirales, the Solidarity program arrived in Chiapas State overnight with its projects for dignified health and hospitals, dignified housing, children in solidarity, and so on.

Chiapas is also the area served by a bishop whom the Pope has asked to leave, charging him to be a follower of Liberation Theology.

This sums up what even the dullest observer believes has taken place in that remote Mexican area, where from 1 January it has been demonstrated that there are at least two Mexicos: the one the official publicity sells and endorses and the one that seems more like Central America than part of the northern continent.

But for those who look at the Chiapas uprising with greater interest from Guatemala, it is impossible not to notice other characteristics.

It is an area where the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity (URNG) guerrillas move about practically with full freedom. It is an area where hospitals for wounded guerrillas have been built, there are safe houses for the Guatemalan guerrillas and even guerrilla recruiting networks in cities as close to the border as Tapachula.

This is the perspective from which the Guatemalan military intelligence, at least, observes what is going on in the Mexican State of Chiapas, which is ablaze.

Sources close to the Army admit that for over six months the second section (Second Directorate or G-2) had information on the activities of Mexican guerrillas. In fact, during a visit to Mexico City, Guatemalan officers offered to help in the investigations. When they received no reply they directly contacted the 24th Regiment in Chiapas. Nevertheless, the Mexicans hesitated in accepting their colleague's help. A few months later they appeared in Guatemala seeking the very information they had previously disdained.

Most of the information supplied to them showed a link between the Zapatist [Zapatist National Liberation Army—EZLN] guerrillas and two Guatemalan guerrilla groups: the Poor People's Guerrilla Army (EGP) and the Revolutionary Organization of the People in Arms (ORPA). To the Guatemalan military, the Mexican rebels are very similar to the EGP in their Maoist leanings, their ethnic claims, and their preference for the "prolonged popular war" fighting modality. The Zapatists have taken great care to demand in their first war declaration the presence of international observers, respect to the Geneva Convention on the treatment of political prisoners, and the presence of the International Red Cross in combat areas, demands that have been made in the past by Central American guerrillas such as the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front and the URNG.

According to analysts, as in the case of the EGP, the Zapatists have carried out spectacular actions to attract international attention to their demands.

The Guatemalan military officers identify the Zapatists with the ORPA because of the type of operations they carry out, such as blowing up bridges and attacks on Mexican Army troops in open areas. [passage omitted]

Argentina

Menem, Ministers Dispel 'Uneasiness' Over Possible 'Uprisings'

PY2001230094 Buenos Aires BUENOS AIRES HERALD in English 20 Jan 94 p 11

[Text] (DYN-NA)—President Carlos Menem and several of his ministers united in an effort to dispel public uneasiness over the possibility of popular uprisings such as those that broke out recently in Santiago del Estero and Chiapas, Mexico.

"Poverty has diminished by truly unheard-of proportions," President Menem told reporters at Jorge Newberry Metropolitan Airport shortly before departing for Mar del Plata. "Thus the possibility of any kind of social unrest can be dismissed."

Turning to what critics have pegged as one cause of the riots in Santiago del Estero last month, when unpaid workers torched the provincial Government House, Menem denied that his administration's economic policies and cost cutting would lead to further rebellions.

There is no austerity programme here," said Menem, "what there is is a process of change and transformation that has made possible this stability and this growth."

The head of state also defended his convening of a sub-Cabinet one week ago Wednesday to address the need to monitor and prevent potential revolts.

The public is asking for security," he said. "You yourselves are constantly saying through the media that it is necessary to implement measures that insure security, the defence of life, property and the freedom of the individual."

Interior Minister Carlos Ruckauf seconded Menem's attempt to end speculation over new measures the government may take to avert potential violence.

The government is not "proposing a witch hunt, nor do we want to instill any policy of fear in the public," Ruckauf told Radio del Plata.

Instead, he explained, the administration is seeking to boost co- ordination among federal and provincial police and the Border Guards.

Ruckauf defended the government's plan to provide new equipment to police officers and criticized those who call for better protection but complain about the cost.

The minister sought to downplay the likelihood that an occurrence similar to the New Year's Day uprising by the Zapatista National Liberation Army in Chiapas, Mexico could happen in Argentina.

"In no way do we compare Chiapas with the episode in Santiago," said Ruckauf. "We never said in any words that pockets of guerrilla activity exist here."

Regarding the situation in Santiago Ruckauf pointed out that local officials have been charged with corruption and the national government "is hoping too to find those responsible for the collective damage perpetrated upon residents" there.

In addition, the Joint Chiefs-of-Staff denied that Army head Lieutenant General Martin Balza had requested a study of the legal framework under which the military may participate in subduing domestic disputes.

"The Army does not condition its intervention but rather it is limited to the strict orders and directions that proceed from the constitutional authority to which it is subordinate," said Joint Chiefs-of-Staff spokesman Colonel Eduardo Alfonso in a press release.

Earlier yesterday Foreign Minister Guido di Tella said told the daily EL CRONISTA that a Chiapas-style revolt was improbable in Argentina because this country lacks a network of guerrillas or drug traffickers.

While Di Tella conceded that "it would be foolish to say we are certain that no senderista defeated in Peru is hiding in Argentina" he added that the government does not foresee any threat to stability.

The foreign minister further rejected the possibility that the government's economic policies could prompt rebellion, claiming that in fact "poverty has diminished in Argentina thanks to the cutbacks."

Santa Cruz Province Signs Federal Fiscal Pact

PY1901180894 Buenos Aires Radio Nacional Network in Spanish 1600 GMT 19 Jan 94

[Text] Santa Cruz Province today signed the federal fiscal pact. The ceremony was chaired by President Carlos Menem, Governor Nestor Kirchner, and other government officials. Santa Cruz has thus become one more provinces that already has joined the government initiative, which initially was rejected by Santa Cruz officials.

President Carlos Menem said Catamarca also will sign the fiscal pact within the next few hours. The president said that perhaps this very afternoon Catamarca will sign the pact. He also expressed his satisfaction over the Santa Cruz decision to join the pact proposed by the national government.

Peru

Fujimori, U.S. Envoy Discuss Human Rights Situation

Fujimori Wants Envoy To Verify Human Rights

PA2001041194 Lima Global de Television Network in Spanish 0100 GMT 20 Jan 94

[From the "Global TV News" newscast]

[Text] Today President Alberto Fujimori said he hopes Alexander Watson, assistant secretary of state for inter-American affairs, will verify the human rights situation in the country's interior areas. He said this after he inaugurated the Huamanga-Huanta road, a project requiring an investment of more than 3 million soles, in Ayacucho Department.

President Alberto Fujimori inaugurated 20 km of the Huamanga-Huanta road in Ayacucho Department. He was accompanied by (Pierre Ramba), UN permanent representative in Peru. This road represents a 3.3 million new soles investment and will allow trade in this area of the country to be stimulated. It includes the (Ayaorcuna), (Guaiguas), and Cusca bridges.

[Begin unidentified resident recording] We wish to express our deepest gratitude because we now know the jobs are being completed. [applause] [end recording]

In response to the residents' repeated requests, the president pledged to undertake the Rashuillca project, which will use lake water for irrigation. The president took the opportunity to briefly visit the Santa Clara Convent where he spoke with the nuns.

Alexander Watson was not present. President Fujimori and Ayacucho Bishop Monsignor Juan Luis Cipriani both agreed that the U.S. official should verify human rights accomplishments in situ and not from a desk.

[Begin Fujimori recording] I do not believe the human rights problem can be viewed simply from a desk, taking into account the partial speculation and information that reaches him. Human rights is an issue to be discussed here in Ayacucho, (Huancasanco), and Huanza, where there are so many orphans. Here, the Army, the Armed Forces in general, the peasant patrols, and the people have defended human rights. That is why we can talk of human rights now, and here human rights are respected because we have defended them. [end recording]

Justice Minister Calls Dialogue 'Smooth'

PA2101023494 Lima Radio Programas del Peru Network in Spanish 1800 GMT 20 Jan 94

[From the "Newspaper of the Airwaves" newscast]

[Text] President Alberto Fujimori and Alexander Watson, U.S. assistant secretary of state for Inter-American affairs, have discussed democracy, human rights, and drug trafficking.

Justice Minister Fernando Vega Santagadea explained that the dialogue was smooth and that there were no points of disagreement:

[Begin recording] Mr. Watson knows Peru's political and social situation very well. The dialogue went smoothly. There were no points of disagreement. Every topic was discussed, particularly the administration of justice, human rights, the administration of jails, and drug trafficking. They also discussed the upcoming summit of heads of state proposed by the United States for the second half of 1994. The meeting is to be held in the United States, but details will have to be furnished by Mr. Watson in person. I will meet with Watson's delegation tomorrow to discuss the justice problem. [end recording]

Fujimori Rejects Supreme Court Review

PA2101142094 Madrid EFE in Spanish 0822 GMT 21 Jan 94

[Excerpts] Lima, 21 Jan (EFE)—Peruvian President Alberto Fujimori has rejected a U.S. request that the Supreme Court review terrorism cases tried by military courts.

Fujimori, who met with Alexander Watson, assistant secretary of state for Inter-American Affairs, justified his refusal to accept the U.S. proposal by noting, as as an example, that the top Shining Path leader Abimael Guzman "could be freed for lack of evidence" should the Supreme Court review his case. The review of terrorism trials "is a risk we cannot accept in the same way that the United States would not accept it if it were in our situation," the Peruvian chief of state added. Fujimori pointed out that the Judicial Branch is not yet "completely reformed" and that the civilian judicial system "is no guarantee that human rights will be respected."

Fujimori and Watson met at the Government Palace in Lima. It was a "constructive and frank," meeting according to the U.S. government official at its conclusion. [passage omitted]

Fujimori, for his part, expressed his confidence that the meeting has served to "dispel the doubts" of the United States about the human rights and democratization process.

Regarding democratization, the chief of state said he told the U.S. official "that the Peru that existed before 5 April 1992 was not viable and that the measures adopted had been necessary." According to Fujimori, this "was a topic that was well understood" by the U.S. Government representative.

Fujimori Terms Meeting 'Positive'

PA2101151894 Lima Global de Television Network in Spanish 0100 GMT 21 Jan 94

[From the "Global TV News" newscast]

[Excerpt] President Alberto Fujimori has met in private and for almost two hours at the presidential palace's Grau Room with U.S. Undersecretary Alexander Watson. The U.S. official arrived at Pizarro's home [presidential palace] at 1025 with U.S. Ambassador Alvin Adams. Three important issues were discussed during the meeting: the consolidation of democracy, the strengthening of human rights, and cooperation in the struggle against drug trafficking. After labelling as positive the meeting with Watson, the president reiterated that the 5 April [1992] measures had been necessary to

prevent Peru from being totally undermined. Here is what President Fujimori said:

[Begin recording] On the democracy issue we have clearly pointed out that the Peru that existed before 5 April 1992, had no future. There was a need to take emergency measures to prevent Peru from being totally undermined. I have mentioned previously that this was a process that subsequently took place in Russia; unfortunately, as we all well know, there were many victims. Here, one-year plus, I would say instead that we have rescued democracy. This is an issue that has been widely discussed.

The second issue was in regard to the strengthening the defense of human rights. On this we have been categorical, I have made myself very clear here. What human rights are we talking about when terrorist violence overwhelmed the whole community and life was not worth one cent here? True, there are some isolated cases [of human rights violations], but now there is true respect for human rights. [end recording] [passage omitted]

Editorial Notes Drug-Trafficking Link With Chiapas Revolt

PY1901225994 Lima EXPRESO in Spanish 9 Jan 94 p A38

[Editorial: "From Chiapas to Huallaga"]

[Text] The theory that EXPRESO was the first in the world to propose that the international drug-trafficking world is behind the armed uprising in Chiapas, southern Mexico appears to have been confirmed. That is not surprising to us.

Of the heroin consumed in the United States, 23 percent comes from Mexico, particularly from the Chiapas, Oaxaca, and Guerrero States, where poppies are cultivated. The plant was also cultivated in Sonora, in northern Mexico, until a few months ago. But joint operations by Mexican Police and the DEA have reportedly destroyed the poppy plantations in the region. Since then, the cultivation of this plant has reportedly been concentrated in the south, where the armed struggle broke out.

It is possible that other elements—ethnic, ideological, or social—influenced the materialization of the revolt, but it is already a well-known fact that drug traffickers usually arm and finance these types of operations, because in order to develop their drug production schemes they must operate in territories that are outside the control of national governments. Drug trafficking prospers where there is chaos, where there is no law, and where the law of the strongest prevails.

It is a general rule that drug traffickers sponsor the fight among local armed groups and finance all parties involved in a struggle wherever they go. This is what happened in Huallaga. Here drug traffickers financed the operations of the Shining Path and the MRTA [Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement], and the work of corrupt Armed Forces and police agents.

In Huallaga, however, two events placed this game of confrontation out of balance: On the one hand, the military, as part of a national offensive against terrorism, were able to weaken the Shining Path and MRTA movements in the region, although without eliminating them. On the other hand, the control of airports by the Air Force and the shooting down of light airplanes forced many drug traffickers to look for better places in the central jungle and in the south of the country.

One of these places, for instance, was Palmapampa, in the Apurimac River valley, in Ayacucho. Here peasant patrols, or at least some of their leaders, who had heroically defeated the Shining Path, became the armed guards of drug traffickers. These peasant patrols no longer see any advantage to the total elimination of the Shining Path. Otherwise, how would they justify their operation? Besides, some officers in the Armed Forces fell into the hands of the zone's corruption network. Here we see again how drug trafficking stirs up internal conflicts and corrupt people to create chaos, in the midst of which it then reigns.

Over the past few years the Army has given weapons to the peasant patrols in coca-producing areas—or potential coca-producing areas—within the framework of the antisubversive struggle, creating, as a result, the potential for future armed uprisings in the area. Even more so now that peasants have begun to cultivate poppies—the raw material for the production of heroin, a product that has a growing market in the United States—in Cajamarca and Amazonas, areas that are higher and closer to their potential market.

Drug trafficking is very serious for many reasons. But one of those reasons—perhaps the most important one—is this: It sponsors the perpetuation of internal wars and corrupts the forces of order in order to keep a large part of the territory out of the reach of law and government control. It is, therefore, an element that goes essentially against national sovereignty and constitutes, without a doubt, a serious challenge to our national security.

The problem, therefore, is not simple, and the government does not always give it the importance it deserves. A few months ago we had the impression that the government would give priority to the fight against drug trafficking. But in the end, and perhaps also due to the DEA's withdrawal, the initiative did not materialize. The government also announced a plan to control the supply of precursors to producing areas—which is relatively simple—but which as far as we know was not implemented, either.

The Armed Forces internal reform program must also be implemented, among other things, to be able to increase officers' salaries to prevent corruption.

In general terms, we need an overall plan that will permit us to confront the problem from all angles. We also have the problem of money laundering, and it should be one of the topics in the agenda of the national call for unity announced a few days ago.

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